of price negotiations for the Patented Drugs. The Committee has the members from Drug Controller General of India, National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research, Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority and this Department (earlier Department of Chemicals & Petrochemicals) etc. The comprehensive product patent regime was introduced in India from 1.1.2005. It is unlikely in most cases that drugs whose patent have expired in developed countries would get patented in India. The Committee on price negotiations for patented drugs is yet to submit its report to the Government.

Adulteration of gold with iridium and ruthenium

588. SHRI DHARAMPAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the adulteration of gold with iridium;

(b) if so, the complete details in this regard;

(c) how many goldsmiths have been arrested in the country for adulterating the precious metal with iridium and ruthenium; and

(d) the steps being taken against the guilties for adulterating gold, so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) and (b) The Department of Commerce has received an anonymous complaint, *inter-alia,* alleging that jewellers mix iridium with gold. Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) is also aware that gold can be adulterated with iridium. Therefore, provision has been made in the relevant Indian Standard for Gold and Gold Alloys, Jewellery/Artifacts - fineness and marking, IS 1417:1999 that gold alloys for manufacturing jewellery/artifacts and gold solders shall be free from iridium.

(c) and (d) The Scheme of Hallmarking of Gold Jewellery being operated by BIS is voluntary in nature at present. So, BIS ensures that gold jewellery of its licenced jewellers conform to the relevant Indian Standard. BIS has no statutory powers under the Bureau of Indian Standards Act, 1986 to take action against jewellers who are not BIS licensees and are involved in malpractices.

Import of pulses

†589.SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:
DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that various Government agencies have imported pulses during the last three years;

(b) if so, the names of agencies and the amount of pulses imported from 2005-06 to December, 2008;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.